

Internal Memo

Date: April 2, 2020

To: All DOC Staff

From: Central Office Area Command

RE: Barrier Face Covers

Based on our ongoing conversations with epidemiologists from the Department of Health, we are finalizing plans to distribute barrier face covers for all in-facility staff and all people incarcerated in our facilities.

The first type of mask being distributed is a 100% cotton washable and reusable mask. This cotton mask will be issued in phases while production continues for the entire Department of Corrections. MCF-ML and MCF-WR will/have received the first type of mask on 04/01/2020.

The second type of mask being distributed is a surgical style barrier mask. These will be issued to the remainder of the Department of Corrections prior to 12:00pm on 4/02/2020. As the supply of 100% cotton masks increases, the plan will be to replace these surgical masks with cotton masks. Surgical masks are much less durable so please be careful with the one you are issued. According to the Department of Health, there is no difference in the level of effectiveness between the two masks.

Please understand the purpose of these masks. As the Department of Health told us, these masks are meant to be source control and to act as a “catcher’s mitt” to protect other people from particles that could be released from the mouth or nose of the person wearing the mask. They are not the same as an N95 respirator, which is designed to protect the person wearing it.

These barrier masks are not a substitute for social distancing and proper hand washing, which remain the most important steps to take.

Also keep in mind:

- Do not touch the mask during your shift or otherwise while you are wearing it. If you do, immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- This is your mask. We have a limited supply to provide and do not have extra masks if you forget it for a shift or lose it.
- You are responsible for washing the **cloth** mask. You should do so daily.
- Be careful when you take the mask off. Do not touch the mask in the area directly over your mouth or nose. And wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after you handle the mask.
- Keep the mask separate from any other laundry, clothing, or personal items.

Thank you for attention to this issue.

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